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EZRA CORNELL

THE FIRST GOLDWIN SMITH LECTURE

DELIVERED

ON

FOUNDER'S DAY, JANUARY 11th, 1913

BY

JAMES MORGAN HART, A.B., A.M., J.U.D., Litt.D.

Professor Emeritus of the English Language and Literature
Cornell University

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In accepting last May President Schurman's flattering invitation to deliver the address on this occasion I felt certain misgivings. The theme of Ezra Cornell and his relations to the university which bears his name had been already treated so many times and by so many persons of note, that one like myself might well be apprehensive of tiresome repetition. Yet, as I consulted our collection of printed matter and pondered the situation, it occurred to me that after all there was room for an address of a different kind, one presenting both founder and university from a different point of view.

Whoever will take the pains to examine our Founder's Day literature will soon discover that it turns in the main upon two points: the justification of the university, the justification of Ezra Cornell in founding it. Now it seems to me that the need of *justification* has passed long ago. The university was incorporated in 1865, was opened in 1868, Ezra Cornell died in December, 1874. We are thus within a very few years of our semi-centennial. University and founder have almost passed into history. Almost, not quite. For even fifty years do not bring the judicial tone, the clear perspective demanded of the real historian. There are too many still living who feel and resent the injustice, the vituperation of the '60's and '70's and '80's. Nevertheless we in 1913 are removed far enough from the pioneer days to look upon calumnies with a calm wonderment that such folly could have been. Our university needs no justification. Let me echo the words of Daniel Webster: I shall enter on no encomium upon Cornell—she needs none. There she is—behold her, and judge for yourselves.

And in the university is justified also its founder, who passed to his final account nearly forty years ago. Whatever of mistake may have attached to his earthly life has faded into oblivion. Look around you, join with me in the assurance that the man who foresaw

—with the eye of faith and hope—all that his university might one day become was no mean man.

I shall not inflict upon you, then, a reiteration of the Congressional land-grant act, of the petty squabbles at Albany over the People's College at Havana and the incorporation of Cornell, of the malignant political and denominational attacks which once filled newspapers and even legislative halls. It shall rather be my object to concentrate your attention upon two points, only two. The first is the personality of Mr. Cornell himself, his ultimate aim. The other is the question, how far he succeeded in impressing that personality, that aim upon the nascent and the present university.

What manner of man was Ezra Cornell? The answer is both easy and difficult. On the one hand, he was not one of those highly complex and elusive natures which are the despair of biographer and critic. His nature was rather simple, we might even say elemental. On the other hand, he was reserved to the verge of impenetrability. Even those who stood nearest to him, his family, President White and others of the trustees, were seldom favored with a glimpse into his inner self. They were constrained, as we are still constrained, to deduce the inward motive from the outward act.

President White has, of course, told the world more than once what he thought of Ezra Cornell. Far be it from me to try to compete with the fullness of President White's facilities of daily and hourly observation. I was, during the first four years, from 1868 to 1872, only a junior member of the faculty, an assistant-professor in the modern languages. It was not my privilege to meet Mr. Cornell frequently, to associate with him on terms of equality. I could only look up to him and from a distance. Yet, precisely because I was an observer rather than an associate, my view may have a value of its own; it will at least present him from a different angle. You will understand, then, that I am merely attempting to picture to you Ezra Cornell as he appeared to me.

Tall, spare, yet powerfully built, he was a man to respect. But he was not a man to dread, to be in awe of; emphatically not. In this

matter he has been cruelly misrepresented. His opponents called him crabbed, harsh. To me he was nothing of the sort. He was *rugged*; yes. Mien and deportment betokened the man who had not found life easy. Yet in this ruggedness there was no touch of the domineering aggressiveness which often disfigures the self-made man. For with the ruggedness there was dignity, I might almost say urbanity. Not, of course, the urbanity of such a man as George William Curtis, the polished scholar and writer, the society idol, but the urbanity of a lofty spirit ready to concede freely to every other spirit its due of respect and appreciation. I doubt whether any one who approached Ezra Cornell in good faith experienced the mortification of being, as we say, 'turned down.' One might fail to get what one sought, but one was not humiliated. The portrait of him in our library does not represent him at his best; it is without what I should call *illumination*, without the shrewd, genial smile which occasionally played round the firm mouth. I hope that some day the university may find a painter who, with the aid of certain photographs in the possession of the family, shall produce a painting like the bust of his eldest son, also in the library; that is a work of intuitive genius.

Ezra Cornell's personality I felt at the time most profoundly. What was I to him? He represented everything that I was not. He was an elderly man of large wealth, gained in business; in truth he was the pioneer in our American system of telegraphy. He was anything but a man of book-learning. And I was a young man whose sole claim to recognition was a modicum of book-learning. The son and grandson of literary men, I had grown up amid books, I could scarcely imagine life without books. The gulf between us, you see, was wide. Yet to Ezra Cornell it was not impassable. Though to him French and German were strange commodities, he knew that they had their value in education, he saw that I was at least trying hard to impart something useful to Cornell students, and accordingly he gave to me that tacit but friendly recognition which he never withheld from any earnest worker.

Earnestness was, in fact, the dominant force in his character. Whatever he undertook he carried out with unflinching devotion. To him we may apply with singular appropriateness the poet's line:

Life is real, life is earnest.

Conversely, nothing was to him more repugnant than pretence, or neglect of duty. I can imagine him quite patient with mere honest blundering, but I can not imagine him tolerant of humbug.

Next to his earnestness I should rank his liberality. By this I do not mean mere generosity in giving, though of that there is superabundant evidence. I mean rather liberality of view, the readiness to admit that every sincere man is entitled to his own opinions. So far as my observation extends, Ezra Cornell was not slow in conceding the superiority of other men who spoke with expert knowledge. This liberality was evident in his treatment of the problem of university education. Of that, however, I will speak later. For the present I wish to speak of his liberality in questions of politics and religion.

In politics he was a pronounced Republican of the old school, a devoted adherent of Abraham Lincoln, a representative of the party which triumphed in our great Civil War. And those were days in which party strife was at fever heat. In comparison with the animosity which raged from 1860 to 1870, the late triangular duel of Democrats, Republicans, and Progressives is child's play. Mr. Cornell was Republican state senator in Albany. Had he desired the governorship, he would have been nominated as the Republican candidate. Yet he never failed to welcome and even to invite the co-operation of Democrats in all matters outside of party issues. So generally recognized was his superiority to mere party that in the final struggle at Albany, in 1865, over the incorporation of the university, his plan was strongly advocated by the two leading Democratic editors of the state: Erastus Brooks of the *Express*, and Mantön Marble of the *World*. It will not be amiss to recall to your memory the fact that the patron of our great college of mechanical and electrical engineering, Hiram Sibley, was also a Democrat, and that his

giving was the direct outcome of his personal admiration for Mr. Cornell. Lastly, when, in 1873, Mr. Cornell was publicly attacked in the legislature on the charge of utilizing the university for his own aggrandizement, he asked the governor, General Dix, to appoint an investigating committee of which the majority should be selected from the Democratic party. Accordingly General Dix appointed Horatio Seymour, former governor of the state and Democratic candidate for the presidency against General Grant, and John D. Van Buren, also a life-long Democrat; the Republican member of the committee was William S. Wheeler, then vice-president of the United States. Mr. Cornell knew that one can sometimes get more even-handed justice from sincere opponents than from lukewarm friends. Of this latter class one specimen will be enough. When the university was opened, October 7th, 1868, the Republican governor, who had been in town the day before, absented himself. His defection was reported to Mr. Cornell, who said quietly: "It is just like him. But we have Lieutenant-Governor Woodford; he will speak far better than the Governor can." I hasten to add that Stewart L. Woodford has been speaking manfully for our university ever since.*

Well, we have progressed since 1868. New York has just had a Democratic governor who, so far from dreading Cornell, had actually the courage to study here. Also a Republican governor who was even more audacious in teaching here.

In matters of religion, also, Mr. Cornell's liberality was proverbial. He cared little for creeds, but he cared everything for the spirit of reverence. Want of reverence was to him scarcely conceivable. He demanded piety of some sort; only, it must be genuine. How could he have felt otherwise? Do not forget, as so many appear to have forgotten, that he was born and brought up a Quaker and was controlled throughout life by the Quaker spirit. Now the Quakers, or Friends, as they call themselves, are nothing if not reverent, sincere, and tolerant. I know whereof I speak. Though not a member of

*One month after the above was uttered Stewart L. Woodford passed away, February 14th. His eloquence has ceased, but his memory will not pass.

the society, I passed my boyhood in the old Quaker city of Philadelphia at a time when the Quaker garb and spirit were much more in evidence than they are now. Many of my schoolmates and playmates and some of my best teachers were Quakers. You will not marvel, then, when I profess the deepest regard for Quaker ways of thinking and living. The Quaker spirit is, to me at least, the most gracious form of true fraternalism. Now it was this Quaker spirit which actuated Mr. Cornell, when, in founding the public library of Ithaca, he appointed to its board of trustees the pastors of seven churches. He himself was neither Methodist, nor Baptist, nor Presbyterian, nor Episcopalian, nor Congregationalist. But he knew that those pastors were good and scholarly men, to whom the community he was trying to serve looked up for guidance.

There is one other act, however, which reveals his liberality in still clearer light. The incident was not made public until long after his death. Judge Finch was the first to mention it, in his address delivered on this day in 1887. I quote Judge Finch's language:

"While writing these words an incident, unknown to me before, has been communicated by one whom many in this assemblage will remember with an esteem and regard as lasting as my own—the Reverend Doctor Torrey, who in the early days of the University was resident here as Pastor of the First Presbyterian Church. He had been preaching to his congregation upon the duty of aiding young men of slender means who desired to enter the Ministry to secure the necessary and adequate education, and quoted the remark which happened to linger in his memory that 'these were Poverty's jewels, taken in the rough and polished for the crown of Christ.' At the close of the sermon a collection was had for the Board of Education of the church, and among the gifts of money large and small was found a little card upon which and over his initials was pencilled in the Founder's hand: 'Select for me one of Poverty's jewels that it may be wrought out—the diamond for the crown of Christ.' When, after the selection was made, he was told the name of his jewel and the expense to be borne for seven years while its purity and light were

being slowly developed, he simply said in his brief terse way: 'Right, I agree to that,' and silently fulfilled the promise until the need of it was ended."

To estimate the full import of such generosity, please bear in mind that the giver was a Friend, a Quaker, a member of a society which does not believe in a specially trained and consecrated ministry. Each Friend is his or her own minister, has the right, when moved by the Spirit, to address the meeting with the divine message. Yet Ezra Cornell, knowing all this, disregarded it. He had faith in Dr. Torrey, he knew that the world in general needed educated ministers. Accordingly, with innate large-mindedness, he gave to a cause which was not his own.

I should like to dwell upon other traits in his character: his perseverance, his coolness in the presence of trial and misfortune. Yet, why speak to you of his perseverance? This university bears abundant evidence to it. Only a man of iron will could have carried out his plan through those stormy years from 1865 to 1874. If you really wish to understand what it meant to fight and win that battle, you must go to the records themselves. No mere epitome can possibly do justice to the pettiness, the meanness, the ignorance and falsehood of those who tried to defeat a noble purpose. Through it all Ezra Cornell moved onward unshaken.

Of his coolness President White has spoken frequently and at length, and from one of those addresses I have borrowed the incident of the governor's defection at the opening exercises in 1868. To this I will add another, taken from my own experience.

In 1871 I was rooming in the town. The great Chicago fire broke out October 8th of that year. Vague reports of it reached us in Ithaca, but we could get nothing authentic, for we were then without daily local newspapers. The first news, like that of the loss of the Titanic, seemed incredible. Passing by Mr. Cornell's house about nine o'clock in the evening—he then lived in a large double building, the site of which is now occupied by the Savings Bank—I saw a light burning in his office. Relying upon his general friendliness to me,

I rang the bell and was admitted. Entering the office, I stated as briefly as possible my motive in this late intrusion. "Is it possible," I said, "that Chicago is burning up? I can not bring myself to believe the report. Will you, as Western Union director, give me some facts?" Bluntly, but in the kindest tone, he answered: "Sit down, professor. Yes, rumor is unfortunately true this time. Chicago is gone. Our telegraph offices are destroyed and we are working as hard as we know how to re-establish communication. It is bad, very bad, young man. It is worse than you can even imagine."

I shall never forget the dignified moderation with which this was uttered. There was in the utterance no note of complaint, barely a note of regret. His whole attitude was that of a man who had faced more than one brutal fact without losing confidence in the final issue. Yet to him must have come already in those first few hours a clear premonition of all that the Chicago fire was to mean. You cannot burn up hundreds of millions of property and paralyze a great business centre without carrying trouble to every town and village in the country. The ramifications of modern life admit of no happy-valley exemption. True, Chicago was rebuilt and resumed her business life with intenser energy than before. But the capital needed for the restoration was drawn from north, south, east, and west. Fire-insurance companies, bankers, railroads were drained of their reserve strength. And the sequel was not slow in coming. Every student of our economic history knows that the Chicago fire was a principal, perhaps the principal, cause of the panic of 1873, a panic which shook our trade to its foundation and which did not begin to pass away before 1880. It was a dreary term of seven lean years devouring the substance of the land. Of all this Mr. Cornell must have had the presentiment in October, 1871. For, as a man of business, he knew the consequences involved in a great fire. Besides, he was already involved in those railroad enterprises which were soon to drag him down in their collapse.

I am loath to discuss Ezra Cornell as an investor in railroads. This chapter of his life spells disaster. Yet it is too characteristic

of the man to be ignored. For his railroad ventures, though planned to make money, were also planned to increase the university endowment and to make the town of Ithaca more habitable. To bring this out clearly, I must go back to 1868 and 1869. Some few in this audience will remember the Ithaca of those days, to all others it will be a mere name. We now journey to and from Ithaca in drawing-room cars, in dining cars, in through sleeping cars; even, during the rush season, in special trains. But when I came here in 1868 there was only one railroad connection, the Lackawanna branch to Owego; the Lackawanna main line through Binghamton and Elmira to Buffalo did not exist on paper. If you wished to go to New York or to Buffalo, you had the privilege of waiting in Owego at the good pleasure of the Erie railway, then the most disappointing trunk line in the country. If you wished to fare north or east, you could—in summer—sail in the steamboat down the placid lake to Cayuga Bridge. In winter there was the cross-country stage struggling through fence-high drifts or floundering in abysmal mud. If you were recklessly extravagant, like President White, you might indeed hire a sleigh and a pair of fast horses and drive twenty odd miles through Freeville and McLean to catch the Binghamton and Syracuse line at Cortland. In sober truth, Ithaca was all but cut off from the outer world. One incident by way of illustration. In the early spring of 1869 both the Erie and the New York Central roads were crippled by heavy washouts. For the better part of a week we got no mails from New York.

Such conditions were evidently intolerable. To remedy them, a railroad was projected to connect Ithaca with Waverly and Sayre, then the terminus of the Lehigh Valley, and another road to connect Ithaca with Elmira on the west and Utica on the east. Into these enterprises Mr. Cornell entered with his wonted energy. In them he invested all the capital he could get together, even selling his profitable Western Union stock and bonds. And the result was total failure. Well may we exclaim: The pity of it! Yet this failure was inevitable. To begin with, Mr. Cornell was not the man for such

enterprises. Though he knew the business of telegraphy in all its details, he was a stranger to railroad building and he was over sixty years of age, too old to master unfamiliar methods. Then, his capital was palpably inadequate. To him three or four millions were a vast sum; in railroads they are only the beginning. When the panic of 1873 broke loose, the railroads to Sayre and to Elmira and the east went down like card-houses, and in 1874 Ezra Cornell's sun set behind clouds. Yet we Ithacans can be at least grateful. The railroads are with us and at our service and still other roads have been added. They have all passed into stronger hands and are managed as connecting links in a great system of transportation. Mr. Cornell labored and we have assuredly profited by his sacrifices.

Let me now pass over to the second general question, namely, how far Ezra Cornell succeeded in impressing his personality and aims upon the university.

I will begin by giving you a surprise, perhaps a shock. Some months ago I was conversing in front of Morrill Hall with one of our best known professors in technical science. Our conversation turned naturally upon students and studies. Suddenly the professor turned around and—pointing to Goldwin Smith Hall—said abruptly, spontaneously: “There is the heart of Cornell University!” And I said to myself: “Good; were Ezra Cornell here, he would smile his quiet approval.”

Does this startle you? There are times when every man owes it to himself to utter the truth boldly and fully. Now there is one truth concerning this university which should be proclaimed from the housetops, the truth that of all our American institutions of learning Cornell is the one which has been most persistently misunderstood, even by its friends. Its enemies sneer at it as a farm with a blacksmith shop. We, of course, find the jibe too poor to call forth even a smile. Yet few of us have grasped and lived up to the truth that this is indeed a university, an institution which teaches all subjects, so far as its means may suffice. And that was Mr. Cornell's purpose, embodied in his motto: “I would found an institution where

any person can find instruction in any study." Taken by themselves, the words sound like an idle boast, as if any one institution could possibly embrace the whole round of human research. Ezra Cornell was no such boaster. His motto must be interpreted in the light of the legislative proceedings which led up to the university charter in 1865. The Morrill land-grant act of 1862 laid stress upon instruction in agriculture and the mechanic arts, and in military tactics. Classical and scientific studies need not be excluded; but they were evidently not to be encouraged, only tolerated. Mr. Cornell's offer to couple half a million dollars with New York's share of the land scrip was upon the distinct understanding that the projected university should be on a broader basis. Accordingly, our charter runs: "But such branches of science and knowledge may be embraced in the plan of instruction and investigation pertaining to the university, as the trustees may deem useful and proper." Thus the legislature gave to the trustees express permission to decide what might be useful and proper. One year later, 1866, Mr. Cornell offered to take the unsold land scrip and locate the lands and hold them in trust, the net profits to be for the university and expressly exempt from the restrictions of the land-grant act. The state accepted his offer upon this understanding. In his letter to the state comptroller he described this trust-fund as "a donation from Ezra Cornell to the Cornell University."

This trusteeship was held by him until October, 1874, shortly before his death. Then it was assumed by the university with the consent of the state. And in 1880 all the money and contracts connected with the trust were transferred from the state treasury to the university. Thus was established, through the direct intervention of Mr. Cornell, a fundamental distinction between the "College Land Scrip Fund" and the "Cornell Endowment Fund," which latter includes the original half million given by Mr. Cornell in 1865. This distinction was upheld by the Court of Appeals of New York in the litigation upon the McGraw-Fiske will and concurred in by the Supreme Court in Washington. The Cornell Endowment Fund is

free from the restrictions of the land-grant act and is a part of the general endowment of the university. It constitutes the greater part of our income-yielding endowment, in round figures five millions and a half, whereas the Land Scrip Fund is only six hundred and eighty-eight thousand. Our total endowment, outside of the Land Scrip Fund, is now about nine millions.

Why did Mr. Cornell deliberately break down the limitations of the Morrill act and make this university a place for study in the widest sense? He had every motive for promoting the objects of the Morrill act. He was the son of a farmer and throughout life took the warmest pleasure in rich crops and blooded cattle. His peculiar gift was in the direction of mechanics. Without training, he was a natural engineer and builder. Why, then, did he not adhere closely to the Morrill act and make his gift to a college of Agriculture and the Mechanic Arts? Because he was a large-minded man, because he was more than a farmer, an engineer: he was a thinker who had enjoyed few advantages in his early life and wished to extend to his successors the privileges of higher education. Interpret, then, his motto in this light, by laying the stress upon "any study." As President Adams put it in his New York address, 1886: "He did not say, I would found an institution where any person can find instruction in any *science*, or in any *literature*, or in any *handicraft*, but in any *study*." His evident desire was not to attempt the foolish impossibility of teaching every one every thing, but to recognize without reservation the equality of all search after knowledge.

When the university was opened, in 1868, the plan of studies was accordingly liberal. That plan was, of course, the work of our first president, Mr. White, but it was the embodiment of Mr. Cornell's policy. President and founder were in hearty co-operation. The income being still quite small, professorships were necessarily few and the range of study was not wide. But the studies themselves represented the principal features in general education. You should remember, also, that in addition to the resident faculty there were non-resident lecturers, most of whom belonged to the distinctively

literary class. I need only mention James Russell Lowell, George William Curtis, Bayard Taylor. In proportion as the income of the university increased, the range of studies widened. A school of architecture was established; later, a school of law. When I returned to Cornell after a separation of eighteen years, the two things which impressed me most were the growth of the trees on the campus and the development of the humanistic side of the university. This side, which in 1872 was only partially organized, I found in 1890 to be thoroughly equipped and giving not only the best undergraduate instruction but even conferring the doctor's degree for graduate study. The humanities had more than held their own in competition with theoretical and applied science. This was merely following the lead set by the founder. The first purchases for our library were the Anthon collection in classical philology, the Bopp collection in comparative philology, soon followed by Piranesi's great work on the antiquities of Rome. All were paid for out of Mr. Cornell's private purse. Mr. Cornell knew nothing of Greek or Latin or Sanscrit, nothing of Roman architecture or Italian engraving. But he had an intuitive insight into the significance of these things in the history of mankind. His favorite religious expression, according to Mr. White, was the stanza in Pope's Universal Prayer:

Teach me to feel another's woe,
To hide the fault I see;
That mercy I to others show,
That mercy show to me.

For myself I take the liberty of believing that he had also pondered that other weighty saying of Pope's:

The proper study of mankind is man.

The impulse which he gave has been continued by others. Our chief benefactor, after the founder, is Henry W. Sage, a business man, who endowed our library and our school of philosophy, and gave to the Greek department its special library of texts and its admirable

collection of casts illustrating the history of Greek art. Now Mr. Sage was not a classical student, was not even a college graduate. He was merely a man of business, but, like Mr. Cornell, he was large-minded; he wished his adopted university to study mankind. It is not my purpose to draw up a long list of Sage and other benefactions; merely to make clear to you that our many benefactors, for instance Goldwin Smith, have only followed Mr. Cornell's example.

At all events you will see that this university is no mere land-grant college but is a veritable seat of general learning.

I will now revert to Goldwin Smith Hall. What does it stand for in our complex of buildings? To answer the question I must go back nine or ten years, to the time when our president and trustees were struggling with the problem where to place Rockefeller and Goldwin Smith Halls. When at last the decision was reached to place them where they now stand, some of my colleagues in the humanities were, I fear, disappointed. They would have preferred the upper ground, the site of Rockefeller, as more retired, quieter, more *academic*. Perhaps I myself shared the disappointment. Yet, now that Goldwin Smith Hall has been in active service nearly seven years, I am convinced that President Schurman was right in placing it just where it is, down in the midst of things, making it the central building of the campus. In front and rear, to right and left, are buildings for the teaching of science, theoretical or applied. Every student of science passes the hall in his daily walks to and from his special work. He has the opportunity at least of learning that there are such studies as the humanities. And what are the humanities? Attempts to teach man to understand himself in the light of historical growth. Whether that teaching be in the form of languages, or literature, or political history, or finance and economics, or metaphysics and ethics, it is always a study of the growth of the human spirit, and the effect of the teaching is to strengthen the student in living in the world after graduation a fuller and a richer life. That is what Goldwin Smith Hall stands for, what Goldwin Smith himself stood for. If the humanities are to be something above mere intellectual gymnastics,

they should stand firmly and squarely, deep-rooted, in the full tide of humanity. Nor is it mere accident that, since the erection of the hall, our professional schools are beginning to lean upon it. They tend more and more to encourage and even to require Goldwin Smith studies.

It is only truth, then, that in Goldwin Smith Hall is the life-blood of the university. After our professional graduates have established themselves in their respective vocations, are what the world calls successful, they may discover with regret that, unless they have experienced on the way some of the educative manipulations of philosophy in this broader sense, their outward success is hollow at the core. And this will be peculiarly true of our graduates in agriculture. The director of our college contends that agriculture means something more than crops and cattle; it means *life in the country*. Unquestionably he is right; our farmers should be taught how to live. But, despite state roads and rural free delivery and the parcel post and the telephone, life on the farm will always remain, I fear, a lonely life. The farmer and his wife and children will always be thrown more or less upon their own resources for entertainment. When the day's work is over, what are they to do? Only one general and unfailing source of entertainment occurs to me,—reading. Unless indeed you would include the Victrola! The country people who cannot enjoy reading are on the road to trouble. Intelligent, sympathetic reading, however, presupposes training. The only adequate training will be found in some form of humanistic study.

And now, if I have not taxed your patience too severely, indulge me in a few reminiscences. I wish to give you a sketch of this day in the year 1869. The phrase Founder's Day had not been invented. We of the university were informed that all exercises would be suspended and that Mr. and Mrs. Cornell would receive all their friends, university or town, in the evening in the parlor of the Cascadilla. The reception, the word is much too formal for what was really nothing but an old-fashioned party on a large scale, was at about eight o'clock. Mr. and Mrs. Cornell, with such of their family as were in

town, stood up with President White, to receive congratulations. It was a most simple, unpretending affair. There were some light refreshments, a meagre band discoursed what in those days passed for music, and the younger set had some 'square dances.' All was over by midnight.

Pardon an abrupt digression. I have just mentioned the name of Mrs. Cornell; but I must pay fuller tribute to her memory. Governor Cornell, in his biography of his father, dedicated the book in these words: "To my dear mother, whose affectionate devotion, frugal economy, wise counsel, patient fidelity and cheerful bearing, contributed so much to the achievements recorded herein; this volume is dedicated as a tribute of filial gratitude and reverence."

Affectionate devotion—frugal economy—wise counsel—patient fidelity—cheerful bearing—truer words were never penned. We who had the privilege of knowing Mrs. Cornell in those days divined that it was she indeed who made her husband's life what it was. However fiercely the storm of obloquy might rage outside, Ezra Cornell could always count upon peace at home, upon understanding and sympathy. And what Mrs. Cornell was to her husband and children, she was to the world at large, ever friendly, ever patient and tolerant. When, in 1890, I returned to Ithaca after eighteen years of absence, my brightest pleasure was in visiting her at the home of her children, in being greeted with the same frank cordiality, the same humorous smile which had been so indulgent to my youthful vagaries. Verily, it was returning home.

To revert to the founder himself. I cannot say in truthfulness that his countenance on that January evening, 1869, was *radiant*. Only the youthful conquering hero will radiate. But at any rate the rugged features wore the smile of contentment, as if the spirit within were saying: The child of my ambition and toil is born, gives visible evidence of robust vitality, has passed its first academic term. Well, what was this child on January eleventh, 1869? Some here present will remember, but most of you will need to exert your destructive and constructive imagination. Imagine yourselves, then, inspecting

the youthful university at this hour in the morning. First, there is the Cascadilla, pretty much as you now see it, but then packed to overflowing with faculty and students. It was the living headquarters. Starting from the Cascadilla, you trudge along a rude country road, heavy with snow, and cross the stream over a wooden bridge several feet lower than the present one of stone. You toil up the bank along the same road through dense woods; the feet of hurrying students have worn slippery chutes almost as steep as the toboggan slide at Beebe Lake. Out of breath, you emerge on the higher level, cross a second wooden bridge, now replaced by the heavy fill between Sage Cottage and the Armory, and at last, across a broad snow plain, you reach, still more out of breath, South University, now called Morrill Hall. By the side is a small wooden structure, in which are lodged the chimes. In this South University are the lecture and recitation rooms, the laboratories, the library; even a few student rooms. Several hundred feet farther on rise the walls of North University, now White Hall, still unfinished. And that is all! In the words of Mr. Cornell himself, spoken to a visiting critic: I have not invited you to see a university finished, but to see it begun.

Of this university just begun he hazarded the prediction: There are those now living who will see five thousand students on these grounds. Bold as the prediction might then sound, it was in substance anticipated by nearly half a century. In 1821 a project was brought forward to establish in Ithaca a college for the education of young men and women, to be under the auspices of the Methodist Episcopal Church but to be conducted on broad and liberal principles. The land set apart for the buildings was between Cascadilla and Fall Creek, virtually on a part of the site of the present university. The project fell through for want of funds, but the idea attracted much attention. In that same year, 1821, Ithaca was visited by a traveler, who published in the following year, 1822, a small volume under the title: "A Pedestrian Tour of Two Thousand Three Hundred Miles in North America. By P. Stansbury." The writer is otherwise unknown to fame. Ithaca and its scenery appear to have fascinated

him. He puts the ravine and cascades of Fall Creek (his name is Fall River) almost on a par with Niagara. Of the projected college he writes:

"For the site of the college no spot could be chosen more eligible than this. Inexhaustible stores for the study of natural history will always be at hand, and for all other sciences the scholar will be secluded in a romantic retirement, which will give additional zest to his researches in their various branches.

"Some large literary establishment has long been wanting in the western part of our State; and as the inhabitants are becoming more numerous, and populous towns fast rising, the wealthy land-owners require for the education of their children a more convenient institution than that of Hamilton or Schenectady. Ithaca will be the place wherein all those minor academies and institutions, at present spread over the fertile and well inhabited countries [counties?] beyond the first of the parallel lakes to Erie, will be centered in one great flourishing temple of science."

The style, you will observe, is grandiloquent, but the thought is clear and honest. It is for you to determine how far the two predictions have been verified. I need not dwell upon the magnitude and complexity of Cornell, its wealth of books and apparatus, its cosmopolitanism and universality. You know that it stands in the front rank of American scholarship. In mere numbers, the five thousand of Mr. Cornell's vision have been passed by an ample margin. In the summer session of 1912 were registered 1307 students; in November, 1912, the fall registration, medical students in the city of New York being deducted, was fully 4500. A total of 5807. If to this we add the winter short course in agriculture, 596,—and I see no reason why this course should not be counted in, for the members are emphatically students such as Ezra Cornell desired,—we shall have a grand total of 6403 persons studying in Ithaca during the academic year, 1912–1913. Further, you should bear in mind that many of these persons are to be ranked far above Mr. Cornell's understanding of the word student. In the university proper are 296 graduate students regis-

tered with the committee on graduate work, and in the short course in agriculture are 25 graduates; a total of 321 who have already received the first degree. Finally, our medical college (New York-Ithaca) of 120 students is a purely graduate school.

To accomplish these results your predecessors laboured and sacrificed much. In truth, life here in the early days and ever since has been a matter of sacrifice. Our first president, a young scholar of ample fortune, was moved to forego the comforts of his well-appointed home in Syracuse and toil year by year in the manful effort to evolve a cosmos on this unpromising hilltop. John McGraw, George W. Schuyler, Henry W. Sage, and others too many to enumerate, made their sacrifices. It is, however, the founder's sacrifices that we are this day to consider. He gave—we may say it with slight pardonable exaggeration—his all: money, time, ambition, perhaps life itself. It was his mission

To scorn delights and live laborious days.

Let me assure you that nothing truly noble and of lasting good is accomplished without self-sacrifice, least of all in education. Whether you teach or are taught, you will inevitably relinquish many of the so-called delights. This university has always called for sacrifice, and—so far as I can foresee—will always call. To each generation of instructors and students the university says decisively: Give me of your best, I demand it, it is my right. So, for the Cornell of 1913 my best wish is this: May steadfast purpose and large-mindedness and generous devotion, in a word, may the spirit of the Founder never depart from you!



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